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THE LOCAL WAR ON THE RATS

The Civic Federation gives out the following on the War for Extermination of Rats, by Dr. Brinckerhoff:

INTRODUCTION: The question of destroying the rat is an important one in all communities, particularly where plague has been or may again be epidemic or endemic. This question is not only of importance to the public officials charged with the care of the public health but also is of great importance to the whole community in an economic way. Lantz (Farmers Bulletin, No. 297, U. S. Dept. Agriculture) states that the rat is responsible for the destruction of many millions of dollars worth of property annually in the United States. He considers the rat to be the cause of more money loss than all other animals together.

In this community, besides this little recognized economic reason for a war against the rat, the question of the role of the animal in the dissemination of bubonic plague is of the first importance. It is an established fact that the rat is the carrier, in the vast majority of cases, of the disease from one community to another and, working in conjunction with the rat flea, is the means of perpetuating the disease in a given community.

Owing to the cosmopolitan distribution of the rat it is of little use to try to exterminate it in any given locality, if such a thing were possible, unless the re-introduction of the species were prevented. This being the case the futility of attempting to rid a community of rats when the next ship may introduce a dozen or more individuals is obvious. Even if complete extermination of the species is not aimed at it is important that the use of rat guards on all lines from foreign shipping and other quarantine precautions be insisted on, not alone to prevent the ingress of normal rats to add to the breeders, but, far more important, to prevent the entrance into the community of rats which may be infected with plague. Supposing that this exclusion of rats could be arranged for (and on an island such a thing is possible if anywhere), what chance is there of the complete extermination of the rat and how should this end be sought?

Before beginning this discussion it is well to bear in mind a few biological facts about the rat, particularly its reproductive powers. These animals have six to twelve at a litter and three to four such litters are born each year. The females begin to breed at from three to four months of age. A simple calculation will show that the rate of multiplication of the species is so fast that only the most energetic and wholesale methods of destruction will have any effect upon their numbers.

It seems almost hopeless to expect that an animal of such tremendous reproductive power could be totally exterminated unless the cupid of man could be called into play. If rat skins were as valuable as those of the silver fox the rat would soon be exterminated or confined to artificially controlled breeding places. It seems well therefore to face the fact that total extermination is not within the bounds of possibility. Exception will at once be taken to this statement by some on account of the widespread belief that an infectious disease (e.g. Danish or other virus) can be expected to utterly exterminate a species. This belief is not in accord with what we know of infectious disease. All infectious diseases are examples of parasitism. That is to say the disease is the by-product of the attempt of a minute and low form of animal or vegetable life to gain a living by becoming a parasite upon a higher form of life. It is not to be expected that this relationship, when detrimental to the higher form, will be established without some attempt on the part of the living being attacked to resist the invasion of the parasite. Our modern knowledge of the treatment and control of infectious disease rests upon an understanding of this mechanism of resistance of the attacked being against the parasite. It is evident that the presence of an infectious disease in a given species of animal in time leads to an increased resistance on the part of the individuals of that species to the causative agent of the disease. This increase in resistance on the part of the individuals of the species attacked is met by an increased invading power on the part of the parasite, but always there is a tendency to bring about an equilibrium so that both the germ and the animal are able to continue to exist. The tendency is for this relation of the disease producing parasite and the attacked animal to become evidenced by what we call a chronic infectious disease rather than a rapidly fatal affection which would be called an acute infectious disease. It is probable that this relationship is already partially established in the case of the rat and the bac-

lus of plague for although the disease plague is usually fatal in the rat yet a number of cases of chronic plague have been found in that animal. In man, on the other hand, plague has no chronic form. For these reasons it is not to be expected that we will find an infectious disease that will sweep the rat out of existence. I do not mean to say that the artificial production of a fatal infectious disease among rats is not a good thing, but only wish to call attention to the fact that extermination is not to be looked for from such measures. It must be regarded as a measure like the use of poison. If plague, to which the rat is markedly susceptible, has not exterminated the species there is little hope of finding a disease which will.

Total destruction of the rat being practically impossible, what prospect is there of partial destruction. This can be brought about in various ways. It must not be forgotten that it is not a simple matter, such as picking loose stones off a road. Every species of animals, in the long run, tends to attain a numerical equilibrium in a given region. This normal number of individuals of a given species for a given locality is determined by a number of factors, prominent among which is the food supply. This being the case, if a given region will support 1000 rats and we kill 500 of them, in the case of such a prolific animal, the normal number will be produced in a relatively short time. Of course if we could kill the rats faster than they could breed we would steadily reduce the number as long as we keep up the process. Experience teaches, however, that this cannot be done. In Kobe the Japanese killed almost 5,000,000 rats in the course of five years and at the end of that time the animals were as numerous as ever! A moderate killing of rats only makes it easier for the residue to make a living.

One might reasonably reply that if this is the case the whole game of rat killing is not worth the candle, and in a certain narrow sense this is true. This is not true, however, in a wide sense, particularly in Hawaii, and for this reason. In endemic centers of plague, such as Honolulu and Hilo, every dead rat means a possible dead plague rat and hence a bit of control of the disease. For this reason alone it is worth while to exterminate the most efficacious means for killing rats, bearing in mind that all means from a blow with a half brick to the most subtle poison are good if they kill rats.

1. POISON. A large number of rats can be destroyed in this way but the campaign must be in responsible hands and be carried out systematically. It is to be remembered that much valuable information will be lost if the dead animals are not collected and examined by a competent bacteriologist to determine whether or not they are infected with plague. This applies also to all rats killed by any means and particularly those found dead. To make the examination of rats of real value the animals should be tagged to show the locality where they were found. If this is done and a plague rat is found, it will be possible to concentrate upon that place and possibly prevent the formation of a plague focus.

I do not go into the question of merits of different sorts of rat poison. This matter had best be left to those in immediate charge of the work.

2. TRAPPING. This is particularly valuable as all the rats killed can be examined. Trapping is more expensive than poison but is a good accessory.

3. ARTIFICIALLY INDUCED EPIDEMICS. The widely advertised viruses, of which Rattine and Danny's Virus may be taken as samples, are certainly able to kill a large number of rats. The difficulty in their use in Hawaii is that like many pathogenic bacteria, the virus becomes inactive, that is, unable to produce disease in rats, if transported over great distances unless means are taken to guard the virus from all external influences, such as heat, that will inactivate it. It must be remembered that these viruses are of the nature of poisons and have the limitations of poisons. Such good accounts are given of these viruses that it might be worth while to attempt to get a virulent culture here in good condition, even if it required a special trip by a messenger.

4. CUTTING OFF OF FOOD SUPPLY. This is to be brought about by insisting upon the rat proofing of containers of foods sought by rats. The rat proofing of feed stores, of swill barrels and of domestic pantries suggest themselves as means to this end.

5. BOUNTY. It has been found that the greatest incentive to induce people to kill rats is to make it financially worth their while. To this end it pays to offer a money reward for all dead rats turned over to the

PAPA OBJECTS.
He is poor and he's greatly in debt;
That he's idle I have to admit.
He is not energetic, and yet
All his clothes have an elegant fit.
They've a style and distinction that's grand
And his manners are very correct,
So I really cannot understand
In the least why papa should object.

I have heard that his character's bad,
That he's rather addicted to vice,
And I think that is terribly sad,
But I think he is awfully nice,
He has quite a swell family tree
That his habits can hardly affect,
So it seems very funny to me,
I am sure, that papa should object.

It may be that he hasn't much sense,
I'd not care if he hadn't a grain,
For I never made any pretense
Of a fond admiration for brain.
What I want is a social success
And a greater I couldn't select;
So in view of this fact, I confess,
I don't see why papa should object.

—Chicago Daily News.

CHRONIC PAINS.
Those who suffer pain from chronic ailments will find that Dr. Miles' Anti-Pain Pills relieve the suffering. After the first trial, they will "wonder how they ever managed to get along without them. If first package fails to benefit, your money back, 25 doses, 25 cents. Never sold in bulk.

PROPER AUTHORITIES. If public sentiment is not against it, the lottery bounty is most effective. This consists in giving a numbered card, for each animal, to each person bringing in rats. Once a month drawings are held at which time the first number drawn, or several numbers, carry an extra sum over the regular bounty paid for each rat. Even in the case of regularly paid employees engaged in rat catching, a small extra payment for all rats over a daily minimum has a stimulating effect.

6. CATS. It has been found in India that the incidence of plague in a given village depended to some extent upon the number of cats. For this reason it has been seriously proposed to encourage the keeping of these animals as a public health measure.

7. FERRETS. The systematic hunting of rats with ferrets is not a matter that could well be incorporated in a plague campaign. It does, however, present a means of obtaining the rats for claiming bounty and so deserves passing notice.

After all we must keep constantly in mind what we wish to kill rats for and not forget that the general aim of the campaign may be much assisted in other ways. Our main object in killing rats is to prevent bubonic plague. As the rat is the carrier of the disease it should be remembered that an important measure in the control of the disease is to exclude, so far as possible, rats from human habitation. Rats frequent human habitation for food and shelter. It seems obvious therefore that we should try to make our dwellings rat proof and so protect foods attractive to rats, so that our houses would no longer be attractive to the animals. This matter is of such importance to a community in which plague is endemic that I would respectfully suggest that the opinion be sought of a special committee to be composed of a public health official, an architect and a lawyer who is familiar with the building legislation.

CONCLUSIONS:
I. The rat can probably never be totally exterminated.

II. Partial destruction of the rat is worth striving for, as

1. Every rat may be considered a potential plague carrier.

2. Dead rats for bacteriological examination are necessary for an intelligent plague campaign.

III. All methods of killing rats are good, but poison trapping and artificial epidemics are most practicable.

IV. The offering of a bounty is of great importance in the conduct of a rat killing campaign.

V. The use of virus to produce an epidemic disease among rats is of such promise that it seems worth while to attempt to get a potent virus imported.

VI. The importance of rat proof construction and exclusion of rats from food supply is such that, inasmuch as it might need legislative action, it deserves the attention of a special committee.

Respectfully,
(Sgd) W. R. BRINCKERHOFF.

NOTE: The above report is based upon matter gained from general technical reading and particularly from personal communications from Dr. L. E. Cofer and Dr. Donald Currie, U. S. P. H. & M. H. S.

TO THE HEAD OF THE FAMILY.
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HONOLULU LODGE 616, P. B. O. E.

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The United States of America, plaintiff, vs. Joseph O. Carter, et al., defendants.

Action brought in said District Court, and the Complaint filed in the office of the Clerk of said District Court in Honolulu.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, GREETING:

To JOSEPH O. CARTER, SAMUEL M. DAMON, WILLIAM O. SMITH, E. FAXON BISHOP and ALBERT F. JUDD, Trustees under the Will and of the Estate of BERNICE P. BISHOP, deceased; YAMAMURA, whose true and full name is unknown; S. O. FUGITA, whose true and full name is unknown; T. NAKAFUGI, whose true and full name is unknown; M. TABARA, whose true and full name is unknown; YAMADA, whose true and full name is unknown; HARAMOTO, whose true and full name is unknown; NAKAGAWA, whose true and full name is unknown; YASIDA, whose true and full name is unknown; GOO PING; WONG HUNG WAH; CHUNG CHONG and LAI SEE; YUKUTA, whose true and full name is unknown; NAKAMURA, whose true and full name is unknown; JOHN ALFRED MAGOON; EMMELINE M. MAGOON, wife of JOHN ALFRED MAGOON; ARTHUR M. BROWN; KALAEONE; JUDAS KALAEONE, MARY KALAEONE, JOHN KALAEONE and JAMES KALAEONE, unknown heirs at law of KALAEONE; KAIMOLA NAKOOKOO, otherwise called KAIMOLA NAKOOKOO GRAY; SARAH NAKOOKOO; ANNA HELEN NAKOOKOO, otherwise called ANNA HELEN THOMPSON; JANE NAKOOKOO, JAMES NAKOOKOO, MARY NAKOOKOO and SAMUEL NAKOOKOO unknown heirs at law of KAHUNE NAKOOKOO, deceased; JOHN DOE, RICHARD DOE, MARY STILES and MARTHA STILES, unknown heirs at law of HIRAMA, otherwise called HAILAMA, deceased; KEKOA-NUI; HENRY GILES; ANNA GILES; SAMUEL GILES, JANE GILES and PETER GILES, unknown heirs at law of HENRY GILES; deceased; MELE; PAOA; JULIA PAOA; HENRY PAOA; DAVID PIKIOI OKUU; MARY K. HARBOTTLE; MARIA K. PIKIOI, JOHN SMITH and JAMES THOMPSON, unknown heirs at law of MELE, deceased; ELIZABETH K. PRATT; GORDRICH PRATT; KATE KENNEDY; MARIA BREWER; EMMA PRATT; LEVI GORDRICH PRATT; EMILY G. PRATT; ELIZABETH S. NOYES; SARAH E. WALSH; WILLIAM PRATT, ROBERT PRATT, EVELYN PRATT and FRANCES PRATT, unknown heirs at law of FRANKLIN S. PRATT, deceased; JAMES M. MONSARRAT, Trustee for SUSIE F. CARTWRIGHT; SUSIE F. CARTWRIGHT; KATE L. VIDA; SARAH SAVIDGE; CHARLES J. LUDWIGSEN; SUSIE E. LUDWIGSEN; MARY PORTER, MARY ALICE PORTER, a minor; J. H. MACPHERSON, whose true and full name is unknown; ABRAM S. HUMPHREYS; CHARLES F. PETERSON; EMMA DREIER; EMILE THOMAS DREIER; ADELE DREIER; AUGUST DREIER Jr.; EDWARD DREIER, DOROTHEA REINCKE, ANNA MARKHAM; W. A. KINNEY, Guardian ad litem of EMILE DREIER; F. A. SCHAEFER and CECIL BROWN, Executors and Trustees of the last Will and Testament of AUGUST DREIER, deceased; EMMA DREIER, Guardian of the persons of the minor children of AUGUST DREIER, born of her body; F. A. SCHAEFER, Guardian of the property of the minor children of AUGUST DREIER, born of the body of EMMA DREIER; PHILIP OFFERGELT; JOHN OFFERGELT and MARY OFFERGELT unknown heirs at law of PHILIP OFFERGELT; LILIANET L. COOKE; A. F. COOKE; EMILY F. DAY; SEELY I. SHAW; ANNA L. SHAW, wife of SEELY I. SHAW; GEORGE F. MCLEOD; THE FIRST NATIONAL BANK OF HAWAII, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Congress of the United States of America; FRANK E. THOMPSON; WILLIAM HENRY; THE BANK OF HAWAII, LIMITED, a corporation organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Territory of Hawaii; THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII; THE HAW